

Lazy Dungeon Master 3 - Finally, a Tutorial

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Intruders

“Heeh, so this is the [Ordinary Cave] huh...”

The male adventurer set foot in the empty cave.

His party members followed a few steps behind him.

There were three people in the party in all. They received the investigation commission from the guild and were F-Rank adventurers.

“Oi oi, be careful. This is still a dungeon, we don’t know what kind of traps there could be.”

“We don’t need to worry, didn’t the guild tell us? There’s nothing really here. Just the Dungeon Core, that is.”

“Yeah, but...”

Even though his timid comrade stopped him, he entered as though he didn’t care at all.

The passage stretched left and right. However, there wasn’t anything to see... just the remnants of a burned wooden door.

“Guess none of the bandits survived it.”

“You think any of the knights would let them live? Even so, it seems there was around twenty of them.”

“Wow... Well, these guys didn’t have good luck, huh.”

“Ah, this way’s a dead end... The other way then?”

“Looks like there’s a room a bit ahead. Let’s go.”

The adventurers backtracked without incident. It was to be expected. In this cave, there were neither traps nor monsters.

... But in just one spot, there was about five to ten Goblins that could come out of the Dungeon Core.

As for the contents of the commission, it was the delicious work of getting a silver coin by just reporting how many goblins come out.

It’ll more or less turn into a Goblin subjugation. Well, something like five Goblins could easily be defeated by a single F-Rank adventurer. Three people would be a surplus for ten.

Then, they arrived at the room with the Dungeon Core inside. Five Goblins appeared from the Dungeon Core. It wasn't a problem with just this many coming out. It was settled with two, three crude swings of their swords.

"Heeh, pheeew.... five. Alright."

"Commission complete. Hmm? What is it?"

One of the adventurers was looking at the Dungeon Core.

"So this is it."

"Yeah."

"Why not break the Dungeon Core?"

"Huh!? What are you talking about. We were told to not do that in the guild!"

"But, isn't there talk about how knights can become Sage Knights and get stronger if they destroy a Dungeon Core? Couldn't we get stronger and instantly get to A-Rank if we destroy it?"

"A-Rank..."

He gulped.

A-Rank. The title of an undeniably successful adventurer.

Even adventurers, those that dream about getting rich quick, most are between F-Rank and E-Rank.

At D-Rank, adventurers would finally earn enough money to make a living for themselves, and C-Ranks were veterans. B-Ranks were respected among those veterans and earning gold coins from a single commission would become normal. A-Ranks were successful people whose names were known all over the world.

Above that there were even the inhuman S-Ranks. Though it was said a single S-Rank person could affect the world, so far it hasn't happened.

"But you know, when they ask us about it, what would we do? There's also the dudes that come after us, what then, wouldn't we get caught and our Guild Cards get confiscated?"

"Theeen, wouldn't it be fine to say it wasn't us? So then since it wasn't us, the guys before us would be suspicious... they'd probably wonder about the bandits or knight-samas. They won't say anything to the guild right? The bandits're already gone, the knights aren't

adventurers.”

“... Oi, you’re a genius.”

Though that would actually come to light immediately once the magic tool detected their lie, the three unfortunately didn’t know there was something like that.

The discussion was quickly settled. Drawing his sword, he stabbed it towards Dungeon Core.

Once, twice, though the sword was repelled, chips were steadily accumulating.

The Dungeon Core didn’t react at all, as if it were ordered to ‘not do anything’.

Then, finally, the sword pierced into it... With a high pitched noise, the crystalline sphere shattered.

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“—!?”

I jumped awake.

... There’s an unpleasant sweat covering me head to toe.

... I saw a bad dream. In the dream, the Dungeon Core was destroyed.

Falling into the hands of a crude adventurer, the Dungeon Core was shattered.

... Ah, seeing a nightmare like that is something you don’t want when you’re sleeping outside.

Since we didn’t take satisfactory preparations, we had food and water remaining in our luggage, but having to order the Clothes Golem to intercept enemies and sleep on the cold ground sucked.

Meat and I were sprinting at full speed to return to the [Ordinary Cave], but the day fell on the way and we decided to sleep in the open.

Though we wouldn’t meet any accidents since there was a map and the Clothes Golems, in the state where I was getting hit in the face

by branches while moving around the forest and couldn't see that well, I gave up travelling any more.

Clothes Golem, come to think of it, how are you even seeing things? Can you even see to begin with?

However, I was thinking a lot about what I saw in my dream.

Someone who became an adventurer for their own desires, destroying the Dungeon Core for their own desires... that kind of story could be found anywhere.

Thinking about it now, even without coming to destroy the [Ordinary Cave]'s Dungeon Core on a commission, someone could one day come to destroy the core for personal reasons without a commission. Besides, all they needed to do to continue being adventurers was jump ship and head to another town.

... Right, in other words, I've just been lucky up to now.

There wasn't any guarantee that someone wouldn't just appear one day and destroy the Dungeon Core.

That nightmare could become truth in the future if the dungeon's current state continued.

No, more than not having the commission, it wouldn't be odd if it happened now.

"... Nuu... Papa.... nyumu... more..."

When I looked to the side, Meat was holding me while she slept.

... Though I'm a bit reluctant to wake her from such a happy dream, it can't be helped.

That said, it was early in the morning and I could see to some degree.

I used [Cleanup] to clean the sweat from my sticky body, woke Meat up and resumed heading toward the [Ordinary Cave].

... Gu-... muscle pains, for fucks sake!

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By the time we arrived, it had already become near noon.

Though it took more time then I though, we arrived at our base.

... When we looked at the cave from exiting the forest, we saw an impossible scene.

At a white table and chairs, Rokuko was gracefully enjoying herself over tea, with an unfamiliar white-haired Ojou-sama. Beside the Ojou-sama was a black clothed butler with blonde hair... a man? No, a beautiful woman in male clothing?

“Ah, Kehma! Welcome back, that was pretty quick!”

“... What are you doing?”

“Eh, can’t you understand just from looking? It’s a lady’s tea time you know?”

Rokuko answered with a boast while sticking out her nonexistent chest.

That’s not it. I wanted to know why the heck you were doing something like that.

“No. 89 Ane-sama dropped by!”

“Heeh, eighty-nine... No. 89? Wait, the Dungeon Core!?”

“Yeees, nice to meet you... ... Kehma-san, are you doing well?”

The white Ojou-sama waved her hand elegantly.

Though she had an unreasonably honest type, I wonder why. I felt a chill.

Dungeon Core No. 89

"Well, yeah, I've been telling No. 89 Ane-sama about everything that's happened this whole time you know. I even told her about Kehma."

"Alright, Rokuko. Come here for a moment... Excuse me, I'll be borrowing her for a moment."

After saying that, I pulled Rokuko away and whispered to her.

"... How much did you tell her?"

"Leeet's see, just now I was talking about defeating the bandits. Ah, she was happy when I told her how tasty the feast of [Melon Breads] was!"

With a giddy shout, Rokuko seemed to be happy from being praised by her Onee-sama.

I struck her head with my fist.

"Ow! What'd you do that for!?"

"Are you good now? Don't tell her anything else. She might be an adversary... In particular, never talk about things related to Golems."

"Uuu, understood... But, there's no way No. 89 Ane-sama would be an enemy."

"... Who was the one to teach you the stupid strategy of only summoning Goblins?"

"... No. 89 Ane-sama."

"Who taught you to summon one strong monster at a time in a single room?"

"... ... No. 89 Ane-sama."

Yeah, in other words, it that kind of thing.

Dungeon Core No. 89 was the one that kept Rokuko from [Growing up into a dungeon].

Meanwhile, she herself became a top ranking dungeon.

She definitely had some motives there, and there was a definite possibility of her becoming a nuisance for us in the future.

Rather, the chances of us being removed in the case we were the ones to become a nuisance were high.

“Hey, No. 695-chan. Is your secret discussion still going on? Could I join in soon?”

“Y-yesh! I’m coming soon No. 89 Ane-sama—”

Still, when Rokuko was called by Dungeon Core No. 89, she was happy... Treating the person with absolute authority over you as rags... No, it was probably an unconscious decision.

“So then, what happened to the bandits in the end?”

“U-umm...”

Rokuko glanced at me. She probably didn’t know what was alright to say.

I answered instead.

“... Well, as you can see, they aren’t here anymore.”

“The knights cleaned it up beautifully then? Un, that’s good... well, I wonder how much DP they all turned in to? From looking at the report, I would think around ten thousand?”

“Report? ... Excuse me, I don’t know much about you, what do you mean by that?”

“Ah, right, you aren’t a human of this world... Let’s do self introductions.”

Dungeon Core No. 89 suddenly straightened her posture further and placed her hand on her chest, introducing herself in a dignified voice.

“I am Dungeon Core No. 89.... From my master, I am known as Haku. Though humans typically refer to us with numbers, I don’t mind being called Haku. I manage the [White Labyrinth] in the Raverio Empire’s capital... I am the elder sister of Dungeon Core No. 695, pleased to make your acquaintance.”

Dungeon Core No. 89 gave a sweet smile... Since she said Haku was fine, I’ll call her Haku-san.

“... Very polite. I am Masuda Keima. Please call me Kehma. Though I’m being presumptuous, I serve as the Dungeon Master for your younger sister’s dungeon, the [Ordinary Cave]. I look forward to

working with you.”

“Oh my, so polite, admirable.”

“I-I wonder if I should also introduce myself!? I am Dungeon Core No. 695—”

“You don’t need to... right, come to think of it, adventurers will be coming, we haven’t prepared countermeasures yet.”

“My, that is... I wonder, is this the information you were referring to?”

Haku-san took an investigation commission ticket for the [Ordinary Cave] from her breasts.

“... That’s...”

“For a moment, I made use of being an A-rank adventurer. From seeing my country’s knights’ report on the [Ordinary Cave], I couldn’t possibly leave things as they were.”

“But I was told it required two people minimum?”

“There was no reason for it, two F-Ranks couldn’t possibly win against an A-Rank. Well, more or less, this one here... she is Chloe, a Succubus. We are both A-Rank adventurers and accepted it as a pair.”

After being introduced, Chloe suddenly bowed. Her butler clothing truly was appropriate.

So she was a beauty in male clothing after all huh? So there was a monster like that.

However, isn’t that an unfortunate chest for a Succubus...? I wouldn’t have realized if Haku-san didn’t tell me she was a Succubus. A pure schoolgirl Succubus. Is she actually a pure schoolgirl porn star? This really is a fantasy world.

“So for a while, around half a month... it will be fine, Kehma-san.”

Haku-san smiled as if to say I was in her palm... Indeed, it really was unlikely there would be intruders coming for now. Excluding the two in front of me.

“Right, Kehma-san. Would it be alright for me to be straightforward?”

“What is it?”

“Are you Kami-sama’s vanguard?”

Kami-sama’s vanguard... let’s see, I wonder. When I came to this world, I was told something by Kami-sama, but it wasn’t really about being a vanguard...

“Though I did meet with this ‘Kami-sama’... he didn’t really say anything in particular.”

“Is that so? Excuse my rudeness, but I used lie detection magic. What you said appears to be true... I heard from No. 695-chan that she summoned you from another world, so I’ve been anxious for a while now.”

“... Sorry, what exactly is Kami-sama’s vanguard meant to be?”

“Summoned from another world, it is a person who destroys dungeons in accordance to Kami-sama’s will... A person who would defeat me, saying [An existence such as a dungeon obstructs the circulation of mana]. They are referred to as Heroes here.”

Ah, I might be a vanguard then. I have no motivation to really do it though.

“Well then... I would like to talk to Kehma-san alone for a little bit. Could we have a moment? Ah, I wonder if No. 695-chan will wait with Chloe.”

“Y-yes—”

“Certainly, Ojou-sama.”

I parted with Rokuko and was lead away by Haku-san. Meat was also left together with her.

... This feels very dangerous. I noticed it when Haku-san stood up, but this person’s feet are amazingly beautiful. Crap, it’ll be bad if she noticed me eyeing her feet. Glimpsing at the lines of her legs through the thin cloth skirt... crap. I want to see directly inside the skirt. I want to carefully watch her strip her shoes.

“... Well...”

Once we were far enough away, Haku-san turned towards me. When I thought about how beautiful she was, I understood why Rokuko admired her so much.

Then, she spoke.

“Would you please stop being a Dungeon Master?”

“That’s troubling!”

This world’s futons were horridly poor. There weren’t acceptable at all.

I don’t feel like quitting being a Dungeon Master so that I don’t have to find better bedding.

“Or rather, you. What are you doing to my cute No. 695-chan. How dare you defile that child, if you say you won’t quit being her master, immediately commit suicide to cast away the absolute authority rights.”

So I’d have to stop being a Dungeon Master in the end anyways?

“... Though I don’t understand what you’re getting at... well, I would be fine discarding absolute obedience rights, but suicide is a bit...”

“Oh my. I’ll keep your admirability in mind. However, I wonder if you would truly annul them?”

Yep, since when I found out about the absolute obedience rights, I wanted to annul them.

Though it was just a dream, when I said “Only put out five goblins, don’t do anything else”, it became impossible for her to do anything even if the situation came to the point of the core being destroyed. Therefore, I’d at least want her to be able to use self-defense at her own discretion.

“Anyway, haven’t you ordered No. 695 something horrible? You ordered for her to forget inconvenient memories... Kuh, you can’t do as you wish! This is why humans—!”

“Wait a sec before falsely accusing me of things!”

“Hmph, I wonder about that. [Come to love me little by little] or [Marry me], ordering her to do whatever pleases your species, until you finally notice her die... humans are untrustworthy. Even though I made sure to properly teach No. 695-chan...”

Ah, so it was something like that....

“... Since I don’t have any hobbies like forcing people against their wills, let’s hurry up an annul it.”

“Right, then right in front of me... Nn, wait a moment. Then in other words, without absolute authority your hobby would be...? What would you do to No. 695-chan!?”

“Your imagination is too wild!!”

It's not at the level of false accusations anymore.

“It's all good... Please let me confirm something. Haku-san. Are you an enemy to Rokuko?”

“I'm not sure what you are trying to say. I don't think could ever be something like an enemy to No. 695-chan though.”

... Then why come?

“... Why did you teach such a strategy to Rokuko?”

“Such a strategy? I taught her various things, but what strategy?”

I asked to check things one by one.

“Then, why did you tell her to summon Goblins?”

“Because it is the most efficient monster to summon in this dungeon. Even if she summoned a strong monster, she wouldn't be able to cover its running costs.”

That's certainly how it is. Their efficiency is good.

“To the limits of her DP, why summon a lot at once?”

“If there are a large number of them, that would be a threat by itself. In addition, there is no core that would be stingy with DP when a crisis approaches the core.”

That is certainly how it is. No one would usually leave strength reserved and die.

“Then, why say deploy a strong monster rather than make rooms?”

“Even if more rooms were made, wouldn't intruders be able to just beat it? It is a fact that monsters need to be produced to kill them.”

That is certainly how it is. No matter if there were more rooms, they would be unable to defeat intruders if they had no danger.

“In that case, why not teach her about traps?”

“Because they would all be disabled if it was cleared one time. In

small dungeons, there is a limited number that can be installed. It would be very expensive to use them repeatedly.”

That is... probably right.

Given that as long as you presumed it to be from the viewpoint of a dungeon, it could all be said to be correct advice.

However, that advice crumbles the moment that premise vanishes.

“I understand your method of arranging conditions for the dungeon. Then, viewing this as a person, wouldn’t it make it out to be a [Safe and harmless dungeon]?”

Right. These conditions were indispensable for a [Dungeon managed by people].

Otherwise, it would end with the Dungeon Core destroyed once the Goblins were routed, instead of leaving the Dungeon Core in the cave.

“Oh my, you aren’t understanding.... it’s simple. Both the empire and the Adventurer’s Guild are my creations.”

Though I was vaguely aware of it, she really was a big shot.

Ah, even excluding her being a Dungeon Core, that is.

No-Good People

“My, you aren’t surprised.

“You received the report from the group of knights, didn’t you say that? It doesn’t feel like you hid it?”

“Well, I didn’t now did I?”

Haku-san giggled while looking delighted.

“But, what was your reason for training the [Ordinary Cave] into a weak dungeon?”

“Because she is cute... though I would like to say that, it’s to protect No. 695-chan. That’s the reason I was truly surprised when I heard that the bandits were settled down.”

“... In order to protect Rokuko, is it? ... Why?”

“She’s my lovely younger sister you know? Though I wish I could give her a guard to keep anyone from invading, wouldn’t the opposite happen by attracting the eye of Kami-sama’s vanguard and become hunted? With that, I made certain to hide her as much as possible... Well? I wonder if my response satisfies you?”

Satisfies me huh?

... If I say it, I still might be stuck.

“... Your reason to hunt other Dungeon Cores?”

In order for knights to become Sage Knights, they needed the experience from breaking a Dungeon Core, according to the story.

In other words, Haku-san was intentionally having them do so.

While protecting Rokuko, she attacked other cores. Or rather, the Dungeon Core was almost destroyed by the bandit suppression due to that.

“No. 695-chan has no relation to that... otherwise, Kami-sama’s vanguard would hunt me.”

For your own benefit. A very easy reason to understand.

“I’m convinced.”

“Is there anything else you wish to hear? Since this is a special occasion, I’ll answer you know?”

“... Very generous. The reason for that?”

“Yes, well, this is a reward. I had heard it from No. 695-chan, but all of the bandits who kicked No. 695-chan’s core, down to the very last one, was exterminated without a chance for escape. You would have had to go on a hunt in the mountain if you missed even one.”

Hmm, I see. Then I wonder about hearing more of becoming a Sage Knight?

“Come to think of it, one of those knights who came here tried to destroy the core.”

“Right! Those seventeen knights, they tried to stab a sword into No. 695-chan to gain favor, something like that was in the report, can you believe it!? Seriously, humans are no-good since they can’t understand how cute No. 695-chan’s core is right? They deserve to be executed, all of them! Since it’s impossible to write No. 695-chan into their offenses, I’ll fabricate some minor treason against the country for the unit of knights. No, perhaps there’s no choice but to end it a simple salary cut for the ones that attempted to damage No. 695-chan to give them thoughts of treason? That way it will be a legitimate execution. Ahh, I wonder if the people concerned are returning to the royal capital without knowing anything?”

Ah, this person is a no-good person. Moreover, it’s a waste of authority to settle it like that.

Something like executing all of the knights goes beyond being dreadful politics!

“Oh my, I wonder if you think that is going too far?”

“No, not at all. Ah, those guys, I figured if there were other bandits, it’d be appropriate for adventurers to take care of it somehow.”

“Hmm, extra offenses then.”

I’ll keep taking advantage of this for now. It’ll be dangerous if I go about this poorly.

... Well, I’m starting to understand this a little. This person is definitely not an enemy to Rokuko.

After all, the basis of her actions is Rokuko. She wouldn't become Rokuko's enemy so long as we don't hinder Haku-san.

"By the way, what were you saying about Sage Knights a bit ago?"

"Sage Knights? Ah, that's just a vague title change. Destroying cores is useless unless you're Kami-sama's vanguard. By doing something like contributing to the circulation of mana, it seems their favor does increase..."

Ah, in the end I'll, about vanguards... silence.

I don't feel like destroying Dungeon Cores so please forgive me.

"Un. You seem incompetent by doing nothing but sleeping, but I will tentatively recognize you as No. 695-chan's master."

Looks like I was accepted... If she's not an enemy, that's good.
A bad person is inside of the beautiful-foot person... no, sorry, it'd be wonderful to be stepped on by a villain like that.

"However, let's have a Dungeon Battle."

Haha... anoother term I don't know sprung up. Moreover, it sounds troublesome. Please give me a break.

A Dungeon Battle...?

“A Dungeon Battle is...?”

“We invade each other’s dungeons and, well, have a contest. The entrances would be connected to each other with space-time magic, we would send our troops into each other’s dungeon, and the first to touch the Dungeon Core wins. Simple right?”

Setting the space-time magic aside, the rules certainly were simple. However, the ‘Imperial Capital’s well-established dungeon [White Labyrinth]’ and this ‘Beginner-friendly dungeon where nothing but Goblins appear [Ordinary Cave](There is a Dungeon Core inspection tour)’ are completely not worth comparing to each other. They were too different. There was below a single decimal point chance of winning.

“Oh, of course there will be handicaps. My dungeon’s degree of difficulty is so high that no one has been able to conquer it in over one hundred years, it’s an extra-large dungeon with several derived dungeons.”

Of course, Haku-san had noticed that as well and added supplementing terms.

“... Right, I will lend you 100,000 DP to prepare. I will create a derived dungeon like the new [Ordinary Cave], and will similarly prepare using 100,000 DP. I’ll install a dummy core there, so it would be your win if you touch it... So?”

“... DP can be loaned out?”

“It can. Since it’s not an exaggeration to call Dungeon Battles contests... well, right, if you win, it’s fine to not repay the 100,000 DP. In addition, I’ll transfer another 100,000 DP as a prize.”

It seemed to be quite the profitable condition.

“... Then, what if Haku-san wins?”

“The loaned 100,000 DP will be returned, in full... Ah, that doesn’t

mean anything unpleasant you know? You'll do it as an adventurer in my dungeon. I'll have you work until you earn back the 100,000 DP. You will swear to hand the responsibility of protecting No. 695-chan until your repayment ends. Isn't it normally impossible to have such favorable terms?"

They were favorable conditions indeed.

With the 100,000 DP I'd gain, I could make the dungeon how I like and could fortify.

However, I should remember.

Although one Goblin costs 20 DP, just 2 DP is returned when it is killed inside of the dungeon, so that's the rate of return. In other words, if for instance 100,000 DP was earned by working on single type of monster, that would be fifty thousand Goblins, or ten of the lowest ranked 100,000 DP Dragons. I wonder just how much time that would take?

... No, wait. That's not it. Would it even 'submit the DP' by killing monsters in the dungeon to begin with? Of course, by destroying valuable monsters, wouldn't the debt increase?

If so, it was the same thing even if I just aimed for items without even killing a single monster. For items, Haku-san may not accept it since she placed it using her DP.

At any rate, only Dungeon Cores and Dungeon Masters could truly earn DP.

"... Earning 100,000 DP as an adventurer, well, that's hard."

"Oh my, I didn't intend something like that. Then 100,000 DP worth of fruits of battle is fine."

"... I would PK as a monster? Don't veteran adventurers gather in the [White Labyrinth]?"

"Fufu, there is also a derived dungeon for rookies you know?"

Haku-san giggled and smiled like she was enjoying this.

I really can't be negligent, this person... is a Dungeon Core huh.

"I understand. Then what is expended on you in the derived dungeon of the [White Labyrinth] will be yours and converted to DP, that's fine. If that's it, how about it?"

“I agree if that’s the case, but… what merits are there for Haku-san?”

For example, if he found a [Scroll of Healing (100,000 DP)] and used it on himself, it would be achieved.

“It’s more or less an excuse to circulate mana by using DP on adventurers, is my official stance. The best merit is… while you are trying to be an adventurer, No. 695-chan will be protected under the agreement you know? … I’ll guarantee her safety by filling up the entrance and not letting anyone in, and look after her in the Imperial Capital… normally, that child wouldn’t agree even if I said to.”

I see. So if she can secure Rokuko’s safety, that was enough of a merit.

“… Go on and accept it! This is a practical test to see if you can really protect No. 695-chan.”

Though, it doesn’t look like I can veto it.

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“So, No. 695-chan, we’ll be doing a Dungeon Battle.”

“Eh— what’s a Dungeon Battle, No. 89 Ane-sama?”

Coming from you!? Haku-san and I then explained it to Rokuko.

“Heeh, it sounds interesting.”

“Well, DP is going to be wagered for this contest. I’ll lend the DP this time.”

“Eh— you can hand over DP!?”

You didn’t know? I didn’t learn until a little bit ago but there’s a difference there, oi.

Come to think of it, I wonder how the DP will be handed over…?

“Umm, it’s not unreasonably for No. 695-chan to know, there wasn’t a reason. The method to hand over DP is… umm, ummm, k-kissing

is needed you know? A kiss!"

"Is that so? Chloe-san."

"No, according to my memory, a handshake is enough."

When I confirmed it with the butler, she properly answered.

"... It's No. 695-chan's first time, and since 100,000 DP will be transferred, a kiss is needed so that it won't fail or leak. It's easy to fail on your first time, so the safest method should be better...?"

Such a flimsy excuse again...

"Guh— 100,000 DP!? I can't take that much!"

"It's just a loan you know? Besides, it's to prepare for the Dungeon Battle. Since the game is about smashing DP against each other, wouldn't it be boring if we used No. 695-chan's dungeon's current state of no DP? This is a handicap from me."

"U-uuu..."

"Since we'll return it if we're defeated, it's just a loan. Don't hesitate and just accept it. This way you'll be able to properly listen to Haku-san's way of doing things."

"... Uuu— I understand. Then I won't hesitate, itadakimasu, No. 89 Ane-sama."

Hey, if you say it like that, [itadakimasu]... I hadn't considered it till now but does that fall under the subject of absolute order rights? Trying to curry favor on purpose.

Ah, Haku-san did a thumbs up that Rokuko couldn't see. I wonder if that hand sign has the same meaning here?

"No. 89 Ane-sama, how should we exchange DP?"

"Close your eyes, open your mouth and stick out your tongue. Yes, good, good job. Leave the rest to me. Well then, itadakima—... I will transfer it."

... Just now, wasn't she about to say 'itadakimasu'?

Haku-san and Rokuko's tongue came into contact and glued together.

Haku-san tenderly embraced Rokuko's trembling body with her left arm, firmly drawing her head closer with her right hand so they

wouldn't separate. Is it because it's her first time? She kept her eyes shut just as Haku-san said. She avoided touching anything sensitive, but she trembled and even her ears had turned red.

Though time seemed to move very slowly up till here, it seemed this was still the preparation phase.

Haku-san held the back of Rokuko's head with both hands. Something in their mouths moved... perhaps the DP was being poured?

Though Rokuko was surprised and almost moved away, the moment Haku-san saw the light connecting their tongues, she was immediately held by both of Haku-san's arms.

After that, it took around ten minutes for the DP to be handed over. When they finally separated, their saliva made a bridge between their tongues, snapping apart.

"... Puha, hah, hah..."

"Fuu..."

The two people who separated their mouths had contrasting faces. While Rokuko was breathing roughly with closed eyes, Haku-san licked her lips in satisfaction.

However, both of them had flushed cheeks from ecstasy.

"... A little of it leaked, but I gave some extra as service."

"Hah, hah, t-thanks, vewy, mush, No. 89 Nee-sama... Hau."

"Ufufu, did you first DP transfer surprise you? Good, since you were held so so long, you should take a rest."

Haku-san gave another thumbs-up that Rokuko couldn't see... Apparently, it also meant 'good job' in this world.

I confirmed how much DP Haku-san deposited into Rokuko's body.

... 114,032 DP. It looks like the DP succeeded after all.

It should have been around 3500 when they started so... oi, she gave the amount of DP we got from exterminating those bandits with great pains as a service? Just what is Haku-san doing for income?

"Ah, right Kehma-san. If you don't make any preparations and [Lose, returning the 100000 DP as is]... something like that is, of course,

unacceptable you know? I won't let you use the loaned DP to repay the loan."

... Oops, she hit the nail on the head.

If she didn't say that it would have been nothing but profit.

Major Renovations

“By the way, this is a service.”

Saying that, Haku-san passed an [Introduction to the Study of Dungeons] to me.

The author written on it was ‘Haku Ravello’. I get it now. Since a Dungeon Core was what wrote about dungeons, there probably wasn’t a need for a primer after it.

“Humans should have lot of gaps in what they know, so pay attention. If I recall... this is popular among other Dungeon Cores I think?”

Haku-san indicated an entry labeled [Safety Zone] with her white finger.

Quickly scanning over it, it read as [Monsters cannot enter, a safe place to rest].

“This is what dungeons call [Production]. Preparing what looks like a magic tool, they tell their monsters to not enter the area. Doing that, humans would go ahead and think at their own convenience that they’d entered a safety zone and let down their guard.”

I see, that’s pretty clever. You’d even get DP from the adventurers while they waited in the safety zone. Above all, the [Safety Zone] really wasn’t that at all. With no witnesses, if the adventurers were completely off guard... they could cover up all evidence. Of course, since adventurers didn’t leave evidence that they’d entered safety zones, people would think they just died in the dungeon normally.

... Since information media is scarce in this world, a ‘book from a big shot in the Imperial Capital’ would be given a high level of confidence. Like mass media.

“Sooometimes, when a monster is arranged to enter the [Safety Zone], they would clamor about with ‘A variant species appeared!’. I would just dye their fur a different color to keep it interesting you know? When I pretend to be a diviner and teach them their traits and

they give me their thanks, it's hilarious you know?"

Wow, I know what that's called. It's called swindling.

But definitely, 'something like that' is convenient. I can also see that it has plenty of uses. I gratefully accepted the book.

By the way, the contents felt more like a way to tell dungeons apart than a primer. Things like famous dungeon capture guides... didn't really pop up.

"Since you'll be studying and preparing, how about we start in three days? Good luck, alright?"

"Is that enough time to return to the Imperial Capital?"

"Although I don't go out of my way to learn things from humans that are at best [Crops], since I'm an adventurer... I learned [Teleport]. Ah, the scroll of teleport is 50,000,000 DP you know? Though even if I used it, I don't use it casually since it uses a quite a bit of magical power. Since it's normally used by the mage division, I don't use it alone."

"... But you just said you'd use space-time magic to connect the entrances for the Dungeon Battle."

"There's a dungeon function in the [Menu] that does that. When I let scholars examine it they said it was some kind of space-time magic, but even though I understand it somewhat... despite understanding if I look at it like connecting spaces, I don't really get it? Mysterious."

Looking at it from my side, isn't it a bit late to call space-time magic mysterious?

"Well, I'm looking forward to three days from now... Follow my memory, fasten my path to the far-off distance. Dash through the sky, dash through time. That place is this place, over there is right here. Intersect, overlap, connect together—[Teleport]."

When Haku-san recited the aria, both she and Chloe-san floated upwards... and in an instant, disappeared in an intense light.

*

Rokuko, who had grown slightly giddy from Haku-san's appearance, came back here after a moment. Sobering up, she looked at the DP and was astonished when she saw the 110,000 DP.

"So, is there a chance to win?"

"There is. There are some rules... but for the most part, they are beneficial to us."

When I said that, she stared in puzzlement.

"Really? Are you talking about using the 10000 DP from the service?"

"... There were no rules against using resources we already had, so... to give an extreme example, the rules have no problem even if we put a Dragon in the dungeon, so long as [it doesn't use DP]. Though I won't go that far, giving monsters magic weapons wouldn't be odd."

Putting her hands up, Rokuko sighed.

"Haaah. Kehma, leave it to you to make a loophole like that... what should I call you, sly?"

"Your beloved Onee-sama was the one to make the rule. It was amazing."

"As expected of No. 89 Ane-sama!"

"Seriously. She's a considerably amazing person alright. In a good way." [1]

Though I probably wouldn't poke through loopholes in the rules if my opponent were Rokuko, I won't go easy on others. If my opponent was essentially me... yep, I wouldn't go all out... ah, I want to sleep. I want to give everything up and sleep already. It'd be hard to sleep after losing though. The [Futon] is already unpleasant enough.

"So, Rokuko, Meat. Your job."

The first thing I took out by using some of the 110,000 DP.
... Was a shovel and pickax.

*

First of all was expansion. Dig the hole. Dig is with a bang. I can get Golem materials as well as being economical by excavating from the dungeon.

I steadily added Golems to the materials gathering operation. I had Rokuko and Meat on site to give the detailed instructions while I produced the Golems... My natural recovery couldn't keep up, so I drank a [Mana Potion (150 DP)]. Yep, bitter. It gets absorbed into my body when I drink it, and keeps working without filling my stomach no matter how much I drink. Preferably, I want a barrel. A mana potion... barrel.

... Oh, mana potions appeared in the drink(barrel) selection. Seriously, that 1000 DP price is obviously economical. I wonder if those containers were expensive? They were crystal glass-like containers after all.

Then, I used [Additional Floor (5,000 DP)], adding two floors above and below for now.

The mountain cave can extend both up and down so that's a benefit. It's assumed that dungeons don't go both up and down as you go inside. With that sort of feeling, I directed the two.

More and more digging! Stone, dirt, everything is good, since it's the gathering of Golem materials!

"Well, we dug the first underground floor... hey, do we reaaaally need to dig? It's troublesome so... can't we just use DP to do it in one go?"

"No good. I want more Golem materials, even if it's just a bit."

I intend for the first underground floor to become the second floor of the labyrinth. There will be fairly convoluted passages.

By the way, it takes more than 10,000 DP when done by DP, but just around a rough estimate of 5,000 DP if we handle excavating the passages ourselves. Furthermore, I also get a lot of Golem materials, too.

"I have no choice but to have Rokuko, who can use the map like me, dig and give fine commands... I'm counting on you."

"Ugu—... g-got it..."

Ah, I'd forgotten about it, but was that just now part of the absolute command?

"Rokuko... Though I have order rights, it's only valid when I say 'it's an order'. Otherwise, act on your own judgement... Well, I'm planning on annulling the absolute command rights when this Dungeon Battle is over anyways."

I'm using my order rights this time to make sure there's no errors in the detailed instructions. I'll annul them after the Dungeon Battle.

"Fueh? ... Ah, un... Is that okay?"

"Partners are of one body and mind. I want us to be equals as much as possible."

"Partner... U-un, right! Dungeon Core and Master are of one body and mind after all!"

"Yeah, I'll leave it to you then... That's not an order, yeah?"

"Leave it to me, I'll to my best!"

Rokuko smiled pleasantly, once again heading off to give the Golems orders for the excavation.

... Well, Meat is... digging several pitfall traps near the entrance. Furthermore, I'll be installing a [Dummy Core (5000 DP)] in one of the passages that are being excavated.

Pitfalls and dead-ends, the classics. Well, I'm just placing a Dummy Core there.

The Dummy Core has a castling function, it could be used to swap it and the real Dungeon Core's positions. In other words, the Dungeon Core can take refuge only if there's a Dummy Core placed.

Though Haku-san won't use the castling function due to the rules for losing being touching the Dummy Core, I will use it here. I'll hide what I can hide.

... The number of Dummy Cores that haven't been found are like the dungeon's remaining HP.

"The pitfalls... are all dug. Floorboards, placed tightly."

"Alright, good depth. Add spikes when you're done... take care to not fall in okay? Make sure to put the covers over the pits."

"Yes."

By the way, the pitfalls' covers were really thin Floorboard Golems. Golems were great for things even outside of the workforce, like building materials. Making a Golem into a floorboard was the most troublesome so far though. Saving DP is important.

Ah, for the Wall Golems installed into the labyrinth, they sometimes move quietly and change the route. Amusing things like that. Like a mysterious labyrinth. I'll get in contact with Rokuko in a bit.

Now for the labyrinth riddle area.

There, I placed a [Switch-Style Sturdy Door (1000 DP)]. The switch was hidden by a decoration Golem, which would open the door if the riddle is solved.

By the way, it isn't a breach of the agreement like this... without that, it would just lose effectiveness and turn into a breakable object like a normal door. I don't know the reason why it wouldn't work with the power of dungeons, but looking at it the other way it's a very solid door with the dungeon's power.

The switch is it's 'opened easily'. It's fine even if the solution to the riddle is something 'anyone can do'.

Though I say that, I just mean that it's a door.

Hidden by the Golem, the door itself is 'opened if the switch is pressed', a very simple riddle solution with ridiculously high strength compared to its DP consumption.

The weakness of it is that the Golem could be destroyed, but... wouldn't you think that 'it won't open if the solution isn't solved' when you saw something like it? I hope so.

... Honestly, it looks like it won't be solved with a glance, because it's just... well, the pitfall traps in the room will open with a wrong answer with the golems, so it'll be interesting.

Now then, there are still a lot of traps I haven't started on yet.

I'll be sure to mix in plenty of handmade traps with premade DP traps. No premade traps at all if possible, I want to alter them all in some way. If I can think of something.

... Ah, my time for sleeping is getting reduced.

I'd like to sleep like a log after all this...

Dungeon Battle, Onset of War

With that, three days after we decided to have a Dungeon Battle, came the day for war.

“... W-we somehow made it in time...”

“No, we weren’t able to actually do it, but... we used so much DP in one go...”

“We didn’t put together our war strength huh...”

We stocked up on a lot of stuff. Not just defense, but also for offense.

At any rate, my aim’s set on the opponent’s Dungeon Core... well, I made sure to use the DP properly. I was being economical but still spent somewhere around 80,000. However, they were necessary expenses.

I already miss the times when I was troubled over 100 DP and 200 DP things...

“I mean, Kehma... that pillow, what is it?”

“Eh? This? It’s the [Heavenly Pillow (10,000 DP)], what about it?”

10,000 DP of the 80,000 DP was used on this.

No, this wasn’t a waste you know? Isn’t it essential to take an efficient rest to work optimally? Therefore, this [Heavenly Pillow] was a necessary expense.

“... What do I get? We still have DP left over right?”

“For now, although the left over DP is to deal with what happens... how about summoning 10,000 DP worth of Goblins?”

“Why Goblins!? I don’t like them that much you know!”

“Then after the battle’s over, Rokuko can use 10,000 DP however she wants. Be it slots, Goblins, or Dragons, or Goblins... or Goblins.”

At any rate, through the major renovations, we serviced the majority of the cave that was bare rock and ground. It already couldn’t be

called an [Ordinary Cave] anymore, it was an imposing dungeon. I should think of a new name... eh, I won't do it so soon now that I feel like it.

"Meat also did a good job."

".... Hahi..."

I patted the completely exhausted her. Though she seemed tired, her doggy tail was wagging back and forth.

It seems like we could make it. I can't remember just how many Golems I made in these past three days... I even made Golems that weren't hybrids. Yep. Rokuko even said something impolite like, 'Eh — you're making normal ones too?' Well, that's because ordinary Golems were Golems that became our labor force. They were mixes of stone and clay though. Dividing it up would have been troublesome so I just used it without bothering. It looked like a Clay Golem though I guess?

*

"How were the preparations? Chloe."

"Everything went smoothly."

The Imperial Capital, [White Labyrinth]'s derivation dungeon [White Trial]. The dungeon suddenly appeared slightly away from the outskirts of the Imperial Capital. Of course, this is Dungeon Core No. 89's... Haku's dungeon arranged for this time's Dungeon Battle. Of course, it was named by Haku herself. She decided to register that name at the Adventurer's Guild when the Dungeon Battle finished.

This dungeon made with more than 50,000 DP had five floors in all. Minotaurs wandered, spears popped out from the floors and walls, and arrow traps were planted all over. Furthermore, Lizardmen would walk around.

And, amongst the monsters, here and there were a few armed with magic weapons around 10,000 DP each... right, several.

"Incidentally, Chloe. It feels as though my weapon stockpile has

diminished?"

"Perhaps they were withdrawn by the 17th Knight Division the other day? We should punish them severely."

"Ah, it can't be helped then. Though I feel like I remembered something like a Minotaur axe, it surely should be something else."

"Axes are often like that."

"... Oh my, it seems that Lizardmen came in."

"This area was originally a Lizardmen rookery."

"But didn't those primitives have nothing to do with us when we came here?"

"There's nothing to do about it since they came in on their own."

... Obviously, she was concealing that the 50,000 DP didn't cover everything.

Of course since she didn't use DP for them, there was no problem with the rules. As for the 17th Knight Division that had their crimes increased... let's pray for their happiness in the next world.

Even though it was newly made, this [White Labyrinth] would be hard for new adventurers to return alive from. Even C-Rank adventurer parties, known as middle class ones, would find it difficult to clear.

Even B-Ranks would have to call it difficult due to the mass of monsters eagerly awaiting the start of the battle at the entrance.

For their offense, she had prepared fifteen Minotaurs (3,000 DP), fifty Lizardmen (200 DP), and one hundred Goblins (20 DP).

Haku deliberately chose them, they were DP-efficient monsters.

She at least had a minimal conscience. None of their offense were equipped with magic weapons.

"So then, how about we begin soon? Chloe, give the signal.

"Yes, as Ojou-sama commands."

Opening the menu, she signaled the [Ordinary Dungeon].

She was used to doing heavy expenditures like this.

"No. 695-chan, can you hear me?"

[Ane-sama! Yes, I can hear you! Please treat me well today—]

A cute voice was transmitted through the menu. A smile peeked through onto Haku's face.

To this child... she would be attacking relentlessly after this... it was hard.

However, she would take care to not overdo it and be hated. Haku was thinking about that.

“Fufu, I wonder if your preparations are complete?”
[Any time is fine!]

“Then... we’re coming. Dungeon Battle, start!”

Haku’s words signaled for the curtain of the battle to drop.

*

A Gate appeared at the dungeon entrance when it began. Golems prepared by the [Ordinary Cave] crowded at the opponent’s Gate, which was plenty wide enough for even a group of knights to pass through.

“I see, Golems... he chose high-efficiency monsters for the vanguard, then. It certainly is cheap to prepare quite the number of Clay Golems.”

Golems had the characteristic of being able to move as much as they need inside of dungeons, which were filled with mana, so their maintenance costs were excellent. However, their reaction time for attacking and defensing was slow and they weren’t fast at all.

“Have the Lizardmen attack.”
“Lizardmen, charge!”

Both armies rushed the Gates. Haku, who had judged that the Golems would just smash the Goblins she had summoned, had the Lizardmen lead the assault. The Goblins’ turn would come after the dungeon capture started as scouts. It wasn’t time to meet a loss.

Leaping through the Gate, the Lizardmen slashed the Golems. Though some were crushed underfoot against the ground, due to their superior speed, the majority were able to turn it into a one-

sided battle... meanwhile, the [White Trial] was being invaded.

“The enemy has invaded!”

The Lamia reported enemy forces on the map. This person was also one of Haku’s retainers. This day, five of Haku’s retainers were in the Core Room, Chloe included. The Living Armor was in charge of giving directions to the Lizardmen’s assault just a moment before.

Though their introductions were delayed, the [White Trial]’s lineup for the Dungeon Battle was as follows.

Amelia the Lamia, in charge of defense.

Dolche the Wraith, in charge of reporting damages.

Sally the Living Armor, in charge of offensive combat force.

Misha the War Cat, in charge of offensive scout force.

Then Chloe the Succubus, general assistant to Haku.

Haku would make overall judgement calls and supervise.

“Number of intruders... approximately two hundred!?”

Her retainers shuddered from Dolche’s report.

“You’re kidding right!? There’s no way there’s that many! You can even see there isn’t that many...—”

“It’s not that! The enemies, they aren’t golems! ... They are rats!”

“Rats!?”

Surprised, Haku reflexively raised her voice.

Apparently, the invading Golems were burdened with boxes filled with rats. Of course, there was a hostile reaction to each of them, so they were specially summoned and put under control. Unquestionably, the rats were enemies. If even one reached the Dungeon Core.... the Dummy Core for the [White Trial]’s side, it would be defeat.

The [Ordinary Cave]’s Golems opened the boxes that burdened them, allowing the rats to overflow out.

“Quickly, exterminate them!”

“It’s no use, the Minotaurs can’t deal with them since they’re so small!”

“Send half of the Goblins to exterminate the rats! It’ll be bad if we

leave this alone!"

"They've broken through the first floor! The enemy is invading the second floor... e-enemy total... around five hundred!"

"The traps!?"

"They're no good, they're too small and aren't getting hit! The amount being hit by the arrows is like shooting Fireballs at a lake!"

"Direct the Lizardmen in the dungeon! Exterminate the rats! Exterminate the raaats!"

Her retainers rapidly became hurried.

Haku, on the other hand, regained her composure.

"I think... the rats are used to scout."

"Eh, that's... it's just a matter of time until they'll finish. Excuse me, they've arrived at the straight leading to the first floor's staircase."

"It's fine Chloe. This was honestly unexpected, I wonder what's next? This is the first time it's been this hard... ah, Amelia, install some flame traps in the third floor's passages, they should gain us some time."

"Ah, thank you!"

If the floor was different from the one the invaders were on, traps could be set up. The trap was a bit expensive, but it couldn't be helped.

But it calmed Haku.

Though rats were certainly excellent as scouts, they couldn't clear. Since the Boss Room was set up in front of the Core Room, the Core Room couldn't be reached without defeating the Red Minotaur, which was the boss.

"The Golems seem to have been settled with. Our invasion can continue."

"Yeah. The faster we get to their core, the sooner I can see No. 695-chan..."

*

“Oooh, niiice.”

Watching them steadily move through the constructions before me on the map, I muttered while moved.

“Hey, they’re filling the map with an amazing force... but why are their troops going so far that way? Is there some advantage for No. 89 Ane-sama?”

“You could say that. Though I don’t think a win is possible with this.”

As expected, the enemy dungeon’s map won’t appear in the Dungeon Battle.

That was natural, since making a maze would have no point if they could see the map of the place from the start. If they knew where the Dungeon Core was, it would’ve been boring.

Though on the defending side, the map was displayed as usual with the enemies indicated to see how the invasion was going.

“Goshujin-sama, the Advance Party Golem Corps, the fifty. Annihilated.”

“Yeah, right on schedule.”

By the way, that group of Golems were almost entirely Clay Golems created with [Create Golem]. Summoned Golems were placed at the vanguard, a gift of being economical. It could also be called using scraps. Very economical. Above all, being cheap with DP was good. Though I used magic stones so they wouldn’t suspect anything, it was still a tenth of the normal cost.

Moreover, their broken bodies could be recycled by collecting them if they were in the dungeon. Likewise, their magic stones weren’t destroyed.

“So then, next is the pitfall traps that Meat dug. I wonder what’ll happen?”

I gently brushed Meat’s head, watching the battle progress.

Dungeon Battle, A Fierce Fight

“There are suddenly pitfalls at the entrance!?”

“Send the Goblins ahead! Find the pitfalls!”

On [White Trial]’s side, Haku’s retainer in charge of their offense was busily coping with the traps.

The pitfall traps tripped them up. A lot of them were immediately caught by them.

Though the corpses would normally plug up the holes if this weren’t a dungeon, this was a Dungeon Battle so their bodies were immediately absorbed.

However, if they could figure out where the pitfall traps were, they just needed to avoid them to advance.

“Alright, pitfall traps found, resume the invasion!”

“—! Wait, a Minotaur fell! … Gu—, skewered, instant death!”

“What!? The Goblins definitely went past that place just a second ago…!”

However, the pitfall traps in the [Ordinary Dungeon] were only reacting to the Minotaurs and Lizardmen, not the Goblins.

“The pitfall traps choose their target…!? Something like that should definitely use a lot of DP… I wonder if the contest was decided from the start.”

“Aah! Another Minotaur! Eleven remaining! Thirty Lizardmen remaining as well! Do your scouting job right, Misha!”

“The Goblins went by there just a little while ago!”

Another Minotaur fell, reducing their numbers.

In a different location, two Goblins fell into a pitfall as their footing collapsed beneath them.

Haku didn’t fail to notice the moment their footing collapsed and fell.

“… I understand it now. The reason the Goblins don’t fall… I’m sure of it, it distinguishes them by weight.”

“I see, with just that much of a rough condition, the DP consumption would be reduced and a number could be prepared...”

“The pitfall traps are definitely hollows under the floor. Though it would take time, you can advance by striking the ground and checking the sound.”

“Yes! Goblins, forward!”

*

“Crap, that was a blunder. Goblins don’t activate the pitfalls... the flooring isn’t equally thick since I made it with a lack of sleep... yeeep, that’s a miss. Guess it wasn’t thin enough?”

“Ah, look Kehma. Check it out, a Minotaur fell down you know!”

“Seriously? Oi Meat, your pitfalls are going great.”

“A-above all, happy I could help.”

The [Ordinary Cave] was seeing some unexpected results.

*

“We have broken through the first floor of the enemy dungeon! ... On the way, we sustained many injuries from surprise attacks. We have few Goblins left.”

“That swords would appear out of the wooden door when opened to skewer them... brilliant.”

“Oh my, I would like to use that next time... What is the situation for defense?”

“Enemy forces, arriving on the third floor! ... The fire traps, able to contain a portion of the rats!”

The flame trap was a trap that literally spat fire.

These ones spat fire at fixed timings. Since they couldn’t constantly spout fire or they would malfunction, they couldn’t stop all of them.

“... The opponents are rats, so the valuable Lizardmen aren’t that useful. What about our offense?”

“Our opponent’s second floor is... it’s a labyrinth!”

“Hmph. Challenging the [White Labyrinth] with a labyrinth? Divide our units to explore.”

Labyrinths weren’t as effective in Dungeon Battles as they were against adventurers.

They could map it out and give commands from a control area.

“Muu, it looks like Golems are wandering around. A set of five... bows!? The Golems are divided between vanguard and rearguard, with the rear guard covering them with bows! The Goblins won’t stand a chance!”

“Tch, are the likes of Golems imitating adventurers? No choice then. We can only respond with Lizardmen... have the Goblins act as sentries, send the Lizardmen and Minotaurs forward in order!”

“Uwaaah!? The enemies’ weapons are too strong! The Lizardmens’ swords were cut!? T-these Golems... all three of the vanguard are equipped with magic swords!”

“What did you say? ... Golems with magic swords!?”

Even though Golems were DP-efficient, they weren’t strong enough to equip with magic swords.

Since magic swords used up quite a bit of DP, they were valuable and strong, so it was better to give to monsters that moved well.

“Rather, there’s only been Golems so far. Does he like Golems that much?”

“... Maybe he has some sort of emotional attachment to them? However, that’s fatal. Merge our forces, pincer them with Minotaurs!”

“Yes! ... H-huh!? P-please wait a moment, the map is being weird, this, why is there a wall there!?”

“...!?”

They compared the map view to the monster’s field of view, but there wasn’t a path.

While they were puzzled by the change, the force that had started merging finished.

"No way, a [Transforming Labyrinth]...! It's a lie, there's no way it could be done with 100,000 DP on this scale!?"

"The important points, I wonder if you don't designate them.... If that's the case, 50... no, 40,000 DP could do it. But probably, there won't be any large-scale traps after this."

Haku was impressed by his operation procedures.

It was extremely efficient as it used a small amount of DP. It was really good. Though it was temporary, the Dungeon Battle required them to use the same amount of DP. What decided victory or defeat was how it was used.

Using a small amount of DP to shave away a lot of DP from the opponent, that was how the fight went.

Then, could Kehma only win when fighting with the same amount of DP...? No, she could definitely feel Kehma's skill.

"Fufu, it's too bad that this battle only used 100,000 DP."

Right, if this wasn't 100,000 DP, but 1,000,000 DP, the difference in fundamental fighting strength could have been overcome. However, it was 100,000. Looking at it from Haku's point of view, this could only be a short-term battle no matter how she tried to look at it.

*

The vanguard Golems were equipped with mass production-type Blade Golems. Only the blade part of it was iron with the rest being stone, plainly economizing.

Doing that, a few Blade Golems could be made from a single iron ingot. The stone was free since they dug the materials themselves.

I also made the bow and arrows. The arrows used scrap material. How they were made... if I had to say, labor and mana potion (barrels).

Furthermore, though by all rights the weapon Golems should have been indicated on the map, they weren't. This was due to the map not more than necessary, so they appeared as Golem + equipment. Convenient.

So, despite looking at the map, the Wall Golems could move while completely in the enemy's blind spot.

"Alright, the Wall Golems could move, Huge Success!"

"That's... the thing Meat hit the other day and destroyed, right? It could move? There's no feet though."

"It's a new model. There are tires under it so it can move around."

Additionally, the cost of this self-propelled Wall Golem was exactly 0 DP. Handmade and made from scraps. They didn't even need magic stones since they were only meant to be used inside the dungeon. The key word here is 'economical'.

*

Completing the labyrinth, the rats went towards the fourth floor in the [White Trial]. There were still more than 150 rats remaining. Once they received instructions, they cleverly avoided the flame traps. Still, their numbers were decreased by the Lizardmen on defense in the stair room.

"No way, we need to ascend again after going down, that's... though I thought the labyrinth was on the third floor, it was two floors together."

"He's not an adventurer, it might be good to have him work as an advisor for our dungeon...."

Then, they climbed up the staircase out of the labyrinth, but it kept going... Two floors. At first, she assumed it was the entrance to the first floor... but what was this, the zero-th floor? Or maybe it was the negative first floor?

"... I don't know what to call it."

"Using something like that's just underhanded... it's now called the first upper floor!"

"Yes, certainly, it's the first upper floor.... there's a door!"

Borrowing the monster's field of vision, the door seemed to be very

sturdy.

And there was an exaggerated sign next to it.

“... What’s written on it?”

“Let’s see... it seems to be a riddle. I’ll read it aloud. [The answer is easy. Don’t overthink this. The way to answer is to divide one silver coin between three people.]”

“To divide one silver coin between three people...? ... Umm, since there is one hundred copper coins in a silver coin, umm...”

“I got it. First off, one silver is one hundred copper. Then, to divide it three ways, the person who divided the amount keeps the excess as the fee.”

A problem of this level was no problem for Haku, a Dungeon Core that had a lot of experience.

“As expected of Ojou-sama!”

“With her, there’s certainly no need to be frustrated.”

“A perfect answer.”

“I mean come on, give up! There’s no way Dungeon Core No. 89-sama wouldn’t know a riddle like this!”

[Wrong. Please come again.]

“”” Eh—!? “””

An awkward atmosphere settled in the [White Trial]’s Core Room. Without them doing anything else, the room’s entire floor turned into a pitfall trap... where was its destination? The entrance floor.

“Why? My answer should have been perfect...!”

“Let’s settle down for a moment okay!? Hey, all of us haven’t answered yet! Ah, the damage report!?”

“Ah, eh—, a-a Minotaur’s ankle was sprained, impossible to return to battle... two died instantly from the fall... for the Lizardmen, three are safe. The goblins... umm, not good! None left! Our remaining troops, 6 Minotaurs, 12 Lizardmen, and divided into three groups, 8 Goblins.”

Haku pressed her hands against her temples while wringing out her directions.

“Have the surviving Lizardmen evacuate with the Minotaur that sprained its ankle... ku—, to fail a riddle that I was confident of... disgraceful...! Stuff the Minotaur that sprained its ankle as decoration, to remember this disgrace...”

“O-Ojou-sama, let’s do this once again with just Goblins! We can go in with the rest of our forces when we answer correctly!”

“.... S-such disgraceful conduct... No. 695-chan is watching too you know!?”

“Endure it, this is a serious matter...”

“Th-the fourth floor has been broken through! The rats’ movements have improved, they can’t catch them!”

“Ojou-sama...!”

Chloe implied that this wasn’t the time for worrying about that. Haku was excellent, so she made the decision.

“Understood... assemble, ass-em-ble! There! Send the Goblins!”

*

[You distribute it according to their contribution level of obtaining it!]
[Wrong.]

[The leftovers are turned into community property of the party, the remainder is divided up.]

[Wrong.]

[... The silver coin is divided into three, giving each person a part!]
[Wrong.]

[Give it to an impartial third party to distribute it!]
[Wrong.]

Oh oh, that fall was magnificent.

As expected, after the second time around they sent a single Goblin at a time to be sacrificed... There wasn’t much weight to it if they didn’t answer correctly, in other words, it was amusing.

“Hey Kehma, this riddle...”

“Ah, Rokuko. You were able to answer it right in three seconds. You’re amazing, seriously, good job. You didn’t even need to hear the end of it.”

“B-because it says the answer! But, no way Ane-sama would...”

“Smart people won’t break out of the loop. Your Nee-chan is worthy of being called smart, I think her constantly coming up with answer is also pretty amazing.”

While giving her a sidelong glance, several of the rats, which had decreased in amount, were able to steadily invade deeper into the enemy’s dungeon after becoming easier to control.

... Maybe I won’t even have to use my hidden gem?

*

[—Wrong.]

“Go fu—!”

“Ojou-samaaaa!”

Haku had been thoroughly tricked.

Even if she thought and thought, it was wrong, wrong, wrong...!

“Ku—, how terrifying... turning this Dungeon Battle into a mental attack...”

“Umm, Ojou-sama... I wonder, is this really a [Gate of Wisdom]...?”

Gates of Wisdom. They were special traps that would test the wisdom of people who came to the dungeon.

It was a very strong door, but once the riddle was solved, anyone could pass.

Haku had also used them to challenge people with riddles.

“... Eh, i-is there a basis to think that? Chloe.”

“Yes. First of all, it is impossible to exceed Ojou-sama’s wisdom. Then... considering the amount of DP consumption this far, would there really be enough DP to install a [Gate of Wisdom]?”

“...!!”

Certainly, earlier, Haku herself had said it. ‘There won’t be any large-scale traps after this.’

Even the worst [Gate of Wisdom] costed 30,000 DP. Though it became stronger with a more simple question, it became fragile with difficult questions, and required more DP.

That much was a large amount for a contest of 100,000 DP.

“Then... this is...”

“There is a possibility it is an ordinary, destructible door... possibly, the pitfall activates when an answer is spoken in front of the door.”

Then it was an extremely foul trap. No matter how you answered, even if it was the correct solution to the riddle, it didn’t matter at all. At the point they decided to stop, they were already caught in the trap.

T-terrifying... Kehma, what is going on inside that man’s head...!?

“T-this an advanced and cowardly trap!! Isn’t this just unfair!?”

“Moreover, if we didn’t realize it, how many times would we have...”

“Uu, but I’m in the wrong for being tricked. I’ll properly acknowledge my defeat here. Fufu, however, Chloe saw through it well. As expected of my right-hand person, you supported me splendidly even though I had fallen into tunnel vision.”

“I am humbly delighted to receive your praise.”

“Umm...”

Then, the pink-haired War Cat girl, Misha, raised her hand.

Of her five retainers, she was the one with the lowest prospects of completing riddles.

Simply put, an idiot.

“What is it, Misha? I’ve already decided to destroy the door with brute strength, will you hinder me?”

“No, nothing like that! It’s just, that, the answer is... isn’t it [Easy]? It said it...”

“Huh? ... Easy? W-what are you saying? Misha. Ah, right, it’s certainly easy, plain and simple. This trap has no answer!”

“T-that’s not it, umm, it’s just, didn’t it start by saying [The answer is easy]!?”

The air solidified.

“N—... no way... no, something like... that... hahaha...”

“N-no way Misha, s—omething... that’s...”

“A—hahaha, what are you trying to say, Misha-san...”

Their voices were strained.

The other retainers also thought... that might have been it.

Then, so did Haku. And Chloe.

“.... ... Chloe. For now, just try it out once...”

“.... ... Yes...”

If this was the correct answer... her mind would break, and, resolving herself, Haku gave the final answer personally.

[Correct]

—She broke.

Dungeon Battle, Conclusion

Slowly, the [Gate of Wisdom] opened.

As for Haku, she managed to assemble her broken mind, and tried to look at the other side...

... but couldn't.

Because, there was a clay wall on the other side of the door.

... Under it was a polite [Under Construction] poster.

Her broken mind exploded.

*

“... Oh, she got it right.”

“Hey, what’s with the dead end?”

“Well, there really wasn’t enough time... I-I didn’t sleep y’know? Definitely didn’t.”

‘Ah, so he slept’, Rokuko was convinced.

“To be blunt, Rokuko was able to figure it out in three seconds—... is what I thought, so I didn’t finish making it.”

“Why not?”

“Because I thought it would be surprising...”

“It’s definitely surprising you know. Coming up to a dead end in a labyrinth... hey, after this, where should they go?”

“Since I hid three Dummy Cores in the labyrinth in addition to the pitfalls... they went past it.”

Two were in [Small Projecting Rooms] from the labyrinth, carefully constructed to be rectangular. The other hidden on the ceiling.

However, Haku-san’s group hadn’t found them since they were currently covered up by Wall Golems.

Though since a real Dungeon Core would malfunction if it was confined in the dungeon by a wall, the Wall Golems were designed to only move when he teleported with Castling.

Still, it looks like it doesn't count as being shut away if the walls seriously isolated it. Though I don't really understand the conclusion, using Wall Golems to surround them was no good. I don't get it.

*

“””” “”””

Everyone in the [White Trial] has become silent.
However, each of them looked slightly different.
First, Haku.

Her smile had solidified.

Misha, who was the only one to answer the riddle correctly, had her face turn blue, ‘Crap, I said too much...’

Then there was the other four retainers, which included Chloe. With the indescribable smile on Haku's face, they didn't say anything.

“... —The enemy, Dungeon Boss room broken through! C-Core Room discovered!”

Amelia's sudden report pushed away the hardened atmosphere.

“Eh, hold up! What about the Red Minotaur boss!? You can't get into the Core Room without defeating the boss you know!?”

“Th—.... they filled its throat, it died!”

She shivered.

Imagining that horrible way to die—not that it wasn't perfect—the rats, mere rats... the fact they defeated a boss monster.

“Ah—ahahaha, t—that's so funny! How are rats as brutal as that!?”

“Please settle down, Dolche... Ojou-sama.”

“We haven't lost yet.... Keep searching with our offensive forces, we must have overlooked something. Chloe, use my spear to defend the

core.”

“As you command, even if it costs this life of mine...!”

As for whether that much was exaggerated for rats, no one could say.

They were shown the unthinkable and crushing defeat of a Red Minotaur by its throat being blocked. With Chloe’s very petit build, she probably wouldn’t be able to take more than a single rat.

“The enemy, still has... one hundred... good luck.”

“I still have to serve Ojou-sama, I can’t die just yet... I’m off!”

So, spear in hand, Chloe jumped out of the core. The rat swarm was just about to reach the Dungeon Core.

“Just in time huh...! Protect! [Firewall]!”

With those words, a wall of flame appeared to enclose and defend the core. The rats took a distance away.

This was Haku’s magical spear, the [Spear of Firewall]’s ability... It used the wielder’s magical power, manifesting the fire-type upper class magic [Firewall] with a single keyword.

—Furthermore, in the event it was picked up as a treasure in a dungeon, it was said to be worth 10,000,000 DP for a single one. A treasure amongst treasures.

“Phew... with this, we should have gained some time huh.”

Chloe wondered what would happen next... she expected a mass of rats to make their way through the Firewall.

When she looked, the rats were huddling together.

That was good, so long as she prepared herself, she could deal with

[Chloe-san! Feint—behind you! There are enemies behind you!
Amount, 10!]

“—!?”

She turned around, but there was nothing there... no, she just couldn’t see them!?

“The heck is—!?”

She searched for the enemies, but she couldn't find them. She couldn't see them. Shouldn't there be ten of them!? Weren't they rats!?

[... —It was... touched...!]

“Haha... the heck is going on....”

She couldn't understand. Exhausted, she undid the [Firewall]. ... After the flickering flames went out, she noticed that there was [Something] transparent above the core.

“... What...”

It was transparent—she hadn't seen it before, like... an insect, or something.

*

Finally, the Dungeon Core... well, Dummy Core, Touchdown! —Wait, Chloe jumped out of the core and put up a [Firewall].

So you can sortie from a Dummy Core... didn't know that. Would've put more Golems to work if I knew it, it would've been an infinite hit combo of Golems coming out everywhere in the labyrinth after reviving.

Though still, this flame was troublesome.

Or rather, it was foul play. Just needed one more step. It was obviously a magic item. I want to cross-examine her 100,000 DP.

The rats were gathering up, let's see if they can't somehow break through it... yup.

Hmm? What's this...

“... Ah, oi, it's defenseless from above. Nice, that's just right. Invoke the [Hidden Gems].”

“H-hey, I don't get what you mean!”

“Invoke them.”

She isn't getting what I'm telling her. Drones are something from my world, like a helicopter... she wouldn't understand something like that.

Well, I made it with transparent materials.

I'd thought about making Water Golems at first, but I didn't think their propellers would be strong enough for them to fly well. Though since I had some empty mana potion bottles, it went smoothly when I tried putting them to use and made some with them.

It was transparent and hard to see. The rats could transport them by swallowing them, the wonderful miniaturization was a success. At most they were the size of a marble.

Weeell, this time in particular... the flickering flames made them extra hard to see!

I could make them with a single type of material, it was even a stealth-type since it was a dungeon-restricted Golem and wouldn't need a power supply. A Drone with a skeletal frame, battery, and communications equipment with modern Japanese technology would have looked like a mountain. Magic is amazing.

And so, the Drones were concealed in a part of the rats' stomachs, going in as capsules that would open in the rats.

It was my ultimate weapon, [Hidden Gem] (Stealth Drone Capsule).

... As expected, they tore their way through the rats' stomachs. Grotesque. Sorry though, even though they all survived the suicide attacks at the Minotaur's mouth... I won't feel much heartache from rats.

Then, the Drones quietly made their way above the Firewall, and though they had a tough time operating for a moment there from the hot winds—they landed softly and—

—we won.

* Bonus *

A short snippet from when they were in the labyrinth.

“Ku— this [Transforming Labyrinth] is annoying... ah, right! Can’t we just break through the walls to advance?”

“Wait, that’s foul play for capturing the labyrinth.”

“No, we don’t have the time otherwise so...”

“... Alright, I’ll authorize it. Go for it!”

“T-there’s communication coming in from the enemy!”

“I wonder what it is. Connect us... Oh my, Kehma-san, what is it? Certainly, breaking the labyrinth and dungeon walls shouldn’t have been in the rules.”

[Yeah, I was just going to give some good information... This labyrinth is... handmade by Rokuko, yeah... Are you fine with destroying it?]

“Wha—...!? T-that’s...”

[In truth, Rokuko helped digging the passages with the Golems and a pickax... so, this is genuinely... her first, handmade labyrinth. So... are you fine with that? Really? Would you not regret it even if she hates you for it?]

“.... Mind games are unfair!”

[It’s my maxim though... So, will you destroy it?]

“—... Of course I won’t break it!”

That communication may or may not have happened...

Difference Between Postwar Treatment and Words

“It was my complete defeat.”

To deal with the postwar affairs, Haku-san visited the [Ordinary Cave] again.

Chloe was wearing the same butler clothing as usual.

“I may have lost, but I learned many wonderful things through the battle. I surely didn’t think that rats would go that far. To turn your scouts into warriors...”

Although she was certain that the rats were scouts, she didn’t think they would be able to defeat the boss even if they got that far.

In truth, she had thought that a second group of Golems would gain control of map pioneered by the rats.

He was struck with the idea of having a midget strategy when he saw the Minotaur. Since he had nothing to lose, he decided to use fifty of the remaining rats to kill Mino-san with a suicide attack.

By the way, since the rats were ordered to limit their living space to the forest to survive, he would probably use them again sooner or later.

“I didn’t think I wouldn’t be able to find even one of the Dummy Cores. Where did you put the Dungeon Core in the end? If you don’t mind, could you tell me?”

“Give me an additional 50,000 DP and I’ll tell you.”

“Oh me, is something so small fine? Then please tell me. If I don’t know, I might not be able to sleep tonight.”

Crap, I said it as a joke but she said she’d pay it.

... No helping it, I’ll answer her. I don’t need to say where the Dummy Cores were though.

However, since the real core was set up in a place that was a huge

joke, she might get a bit angry from the answer.

“... To tell the truth, this dungeon continues... around one kilometer away, there’s a small room. I put it there.”

The direction I pointed to? The Goblin Room.

... I thought about bringing it back at first, but wound up leaving it there in the end.

As I thought, Haku-san was speechless... Though, it didn’t feel like she was angry. It was more like admiration.

“... Really, looking closely I do see mana connecting... not just in front of this cave, but extending outside of the dungeon... I didn’t notice.”

“Installing the Dungeon Core outside of the first floor... such a bold move, surprising isn’t it, Ojou-sama.”

“No. 89 Ane-sama’s teachings were right after all!”

Yep, she doesn’t understand why, but Rokuko found the idea amusing.

You just disregarded everything but a single room and made nothing else.

“Haah, the labyrinth was splendid, it was my first time seeing that usage... ah, those pitfall traps were a big gamble. Though I used Minotaurs as primary war potential this time, I could have had my forces comprise of something weightless like Wraiths. The best thing that I saw was installing two floors above and below.”

Definitely, the pitfall traps wouldn’t have activated if that were the case. Well, they also wouldn’t have found the hidden passages inside the pitfalls.

... Ah, the homemade pitfall traps didn’t cost DP, but that might have been impossible to tell just from looking.

Since she especially advised me, I didn’t do something as boorish as correct her. It was better to keep quiet on that.

“Also... gu—, that [Gate of Wisdom]... was that a riddle from your world?

“Yeah. Weeell, it was hard to come up with. There weren’t many riddles I could’ve use there.”

“Is that so... it’s fine already, so please let me hit you once.”

“Hahaha, I’ll decline.”

It was probably very vexing. I didn’t tell her that Rokuko solved it in three seconds.

“... I’m not very interested in riddles so I don’t use them.”

“What, so you used wordplay. Somehow, it seems it’s translating on its own...”

Right, for instance, I had told Rokuko, ‘The futon blew up’.

She heard something like, ‘The futon bursted’. That kind of thing. The traditional Japanese gag didn’t go along with it.

Therefore, for instance [What is the doctor that can only break cars?] [Answer: Dentists (Kanji for dentist reads the same as out-of-service vehicle)], the wordplay solution for the riddle didn’t go through.

Furthermore, riddles that relied on the shapes of words were out. To begin with, the characters were different.

Since there’s no problem if there’s an image, I plan on using that next time.

Together with remembering how amazing magic is over and over, I should give up on memorizing this world’s language. It translates itself too much, I can’t study. I could probably do it if I did my best, but I don’t feel like doing that.

“Right, Ane-sama, get this! My name is Rokuko now. It comes from 695 in another world’s language! ‘Ro’ is 6, ‘ku’ is 9, and ‘ko’ is 5!”

Rokuko didn’t even know the origin of her own name.

When I noticed that and told her, she was really happy for some reason. I thought that she’d be angry that her name came from a number since it was a serious thing, but it looked like she was really happy about it. I don’t get Dungeon Cores’ tastes.

Other than the digits was [No.], it might be a unique rule.

“! That’s amazing, such a wonderful name... ahh, I’m envious.”

“So, call me Rokuko from now on, No. 89 Ane-sama.”

“Yes, I understand. Rokuko-chan... Haah, so good. I’m Haku since

“my hair is white, you know? Really, Master has the worst taste...”
“... Huh? Haku-san, isn’t it Haku since that’s number eight and nine?”

When I unintentionally cut in, Haku-san suddenly stopped.

... It seems she’s thinking about something.

After a while, she opened her mouth.

“... Rokuko-chan. From now on, could you call me Haku? If that’s how it is, it matches another world’s numbers.”

“Yes, Haku Ane-sama!”

I wonder if she still feels some complicated things about it? Haku-san pat Rokuko’s head while smiling.

“Right, the story drifted off course for a moment. I really did want to review some more, but even if it doesn’t look like it, I am very busy... Because a new dungeon has now been made, I need to process it... Ah, I’ve been wondering what that last thing was, but it would be inelegant to ask about a dungeon’s trump card, wouldn’t it?”

That last thing... meaning the [Hidden Gems].

I feel it’d be fine to tell her, but she might have fun trying to figure it out herself.

“Well then, Rokuko-chan. How about... I transfer the DP now?”

“Y-yesh!”

Taking Rokuko’s hand with a smile, Haku smiled gladly.

It was 150,000 DP with the information fee included.

Though she said she was busy, she took her time deliberately transferring it mouth-to-mouth with her.

Thanks for the treat.

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